

# BOYLSTON STREET TRANSFORMATION

## PROCESS OVERVIEW AND PRELIMINARY IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

TOWN OF BROOKLINE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

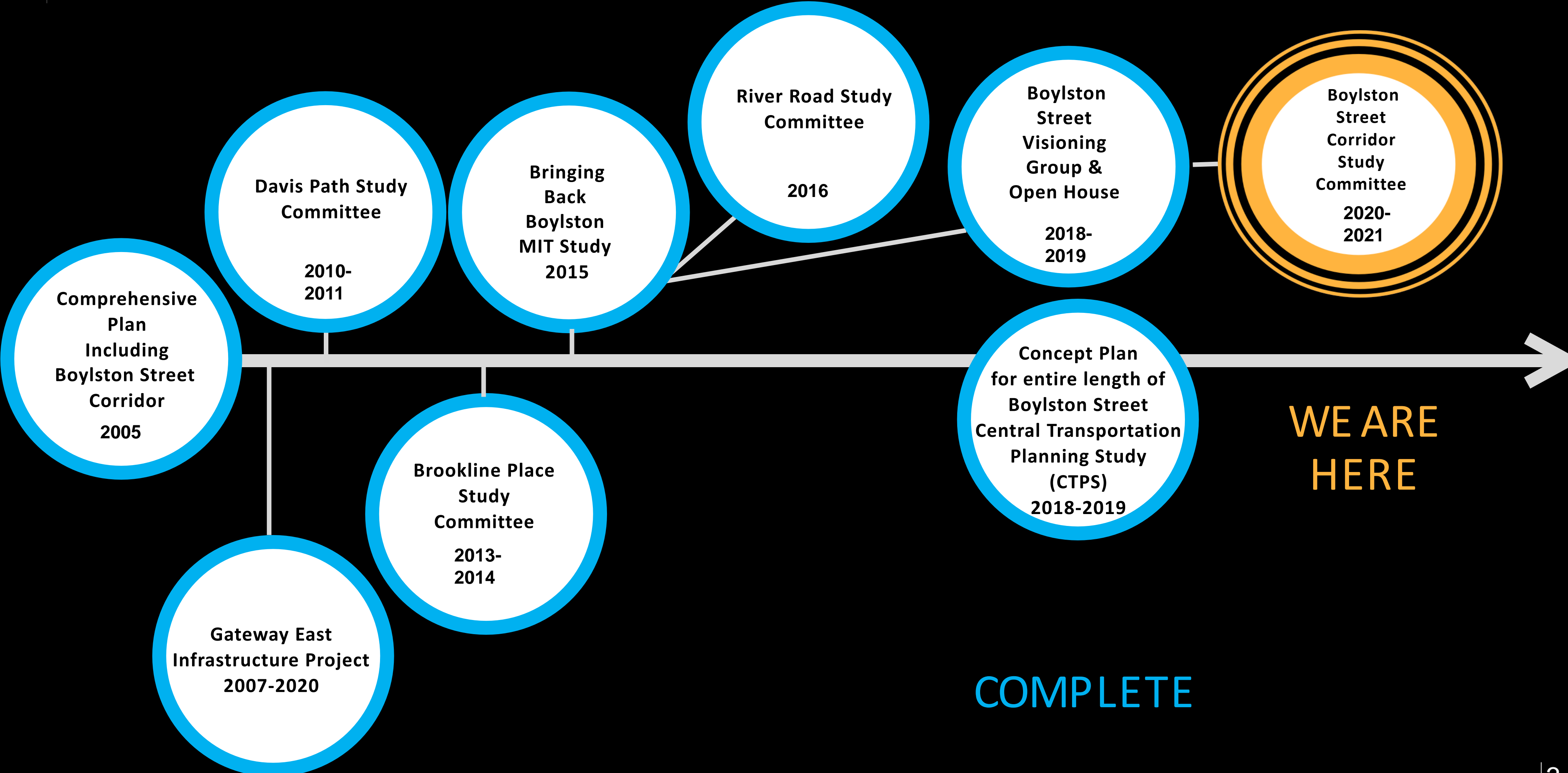
*Presenter: Eddie Bates, Community Planner*

# VISION STATEMENT

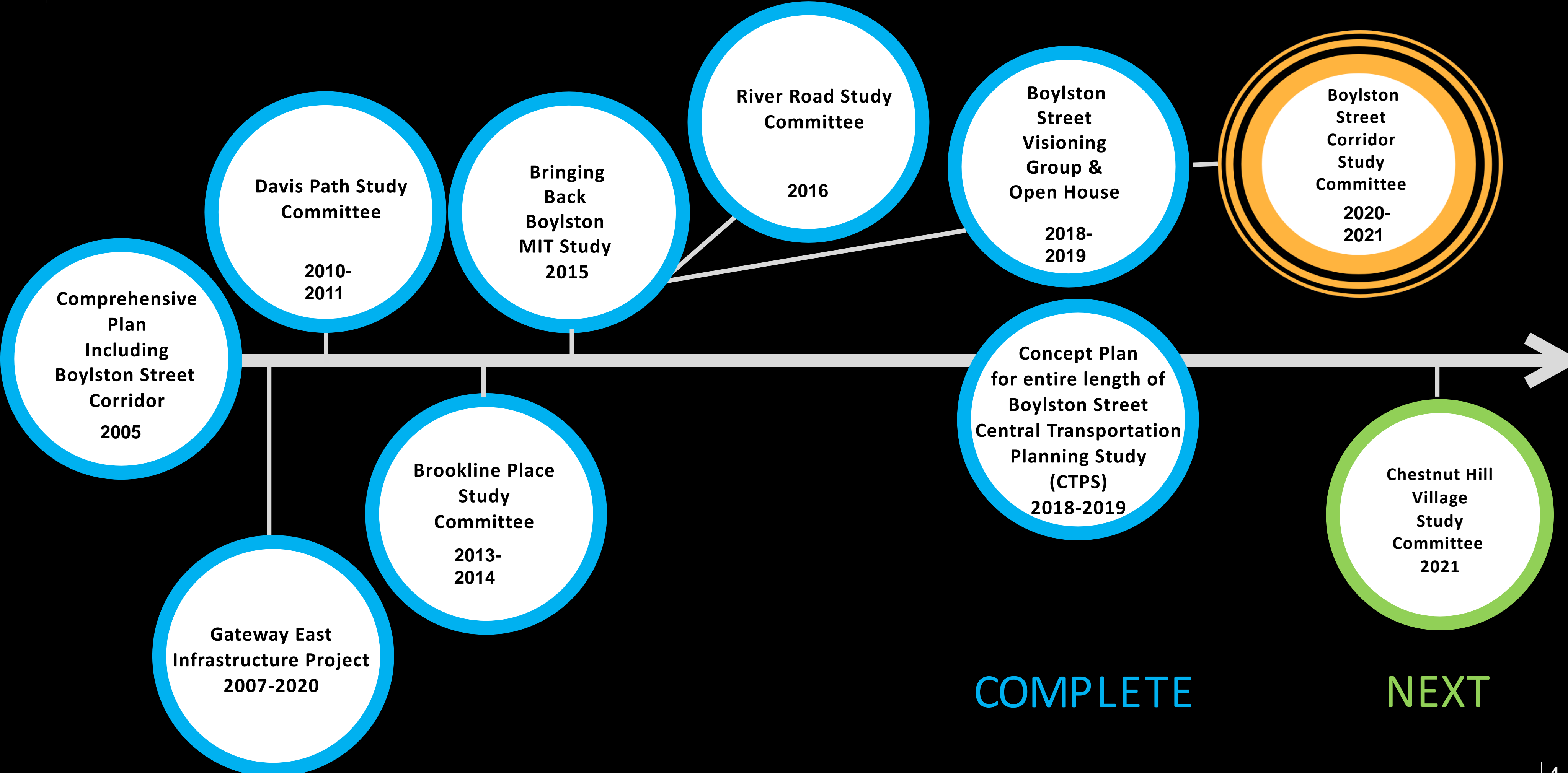
*“The Boylston Street corridor will be transformed into a place defined by walkability, multi-modal transportation, a contextually-appropriate urban character, a mix of uses, open space, and an active public realm.”*

*~ Boylston Street Visioning Group*

# BOYLSTON STREET TRANSFORMATION TIMELINE



# BOYLSTON STREET TRANSFORMATION TIMELINE



COMPLETE

NEXT

# Planners' Implementation Toolbox

- **Zoning (which can include financial incentives)**
- **Design Guidelines**
- **Licensing regulations**
- **Leverage town-owned property & easements**
- **Public Infrastructure Projects**
- **Public Policy Programs (e.g., Housing Trust Fund, façade loan program)**

# Planners' Implementation Toolbox

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- 

**Stakeholder Identification -> Vision -> Goals -> Implementation**

# Stakeholder Identification (Whose Vision?)

Select Board as voiced in Committee Charge, including:

- Boylston Street Visioning Group Vision

- Town Policy Objectives as prioritized by Select Board

Town Vision as voiced in Comprehensive Plan

Current residents, businesses, & property owners

Future stakeholders

# VISION STATEMENT

*“The Boylston Street corridor will be transformed into a place defined by walkability, multi-modal transportation, a contextually-appropriate urban character, a mix of uses, open space, and an active public realm.”*

*~ Boylston Street Visioning Group*



# TOWN POLICY OBJECTIVES

1. *Improved streetscape*
2. *Housing - especially for households between 100 and 120% Area Median Income, which may include preservation of existing housing stock*
3. *Strategies to increase housing rental and ownership opportunities for historically excluded populations in Town, particularly African-American and Hispanic families*
4. *Plan for denser development adjacent to MBTA stations while balancing appropriate scale and use for each neighborhood*
5. *Appropriate opportunities for new businesses and other uses in the corridor, especially ones that provide a “third” social surrounding opportunity (i.e., third to home and work)*
6. *Increase daytime population presence along the corridor (employees, customers)*
7. *Strategies to incentivize business ownership by minority groups underrepresented in Brookline, women, and/or members of the LBGTQ community*
8. *Growth of commercial property taxes*
9. *Sustainability*

*~ Select Board*

# Stakeholder ID -> Vision-> Goals -> Implementation

- Don't Panic; Planning is an Iterative Process
- View Already Stated Vision & Goals as a Resource, not Tightly Bound Box

# Draft Goals (starting point recommended by staff)

- By geography, define areas to protect/ enhance/ revitalize
  - zoning & design guidelines are a primary tool; understand what changes will continue to occur with existing zoning in place
  - incorporate & further recommend specific infrastructure improvements
  - enhance existing townwide public policy programs (e.g., façade loan program)
- By townwide public policy objectives, identify how to best implement here
  - Research new building types or program ideas
  - Understand from regional developers the impediments and financial limitations to those objectives, as well as prioritizing those items that we can most strongly influence

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# RECENT DEVELOPMENTS



20 Boylston Street  
(In construction)



223-229 Boylston Street (In  
Planning)



199-201 Boylston Street (In  
Construction)



Audi Dealership (Completed)



# AREAS TO PROTECT

- Cameron Street Neighborhood
- Old Lincoln School
- Madris Building
- Mobil Station





# AREAS TO ENHANCE

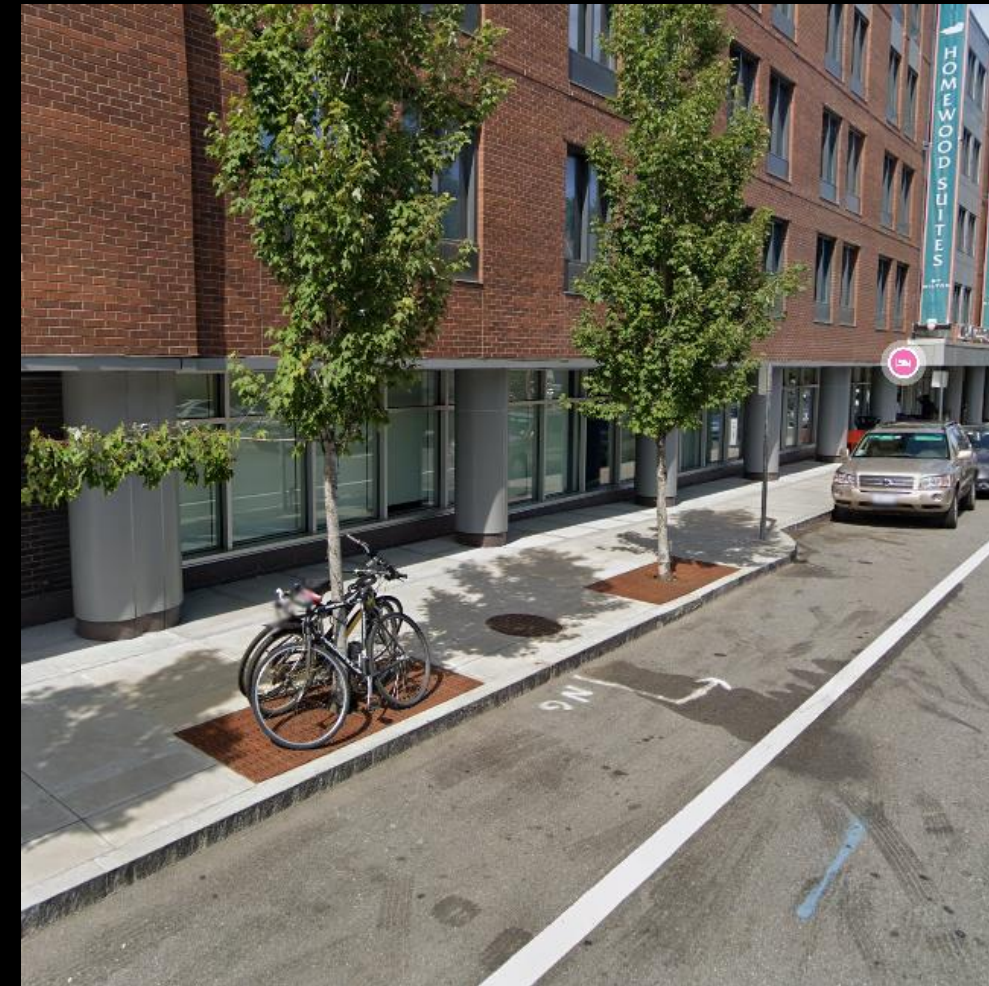
- Cypress Street (Improve Commercial Facades)
- Walkability along Route 9
- Route 9 Cross Sections
- Davis Walking Path and Bridge
- Enhance Lincoln School and Open Space and a Community Asset





# AREAS TO REVITALIZE

- Bicycle Infrastructure Improvement along Boylston Street
- Car-Centered Uses to Housing and Commercial
- Ped Crossings on Boylston St.





# **PRELIMINARY ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS**



# Boylston and Cypress



- Maintain existing mixed-use and encourage contextual infill development for Madris Building, Mobil Station and Ace Ticket corners
- Encourage higher density mixed-use and commercial development for Audi building corner



Maintain existing mixed-use



Encourage higher-density mixed use



# Boylston and Cypress



**Madris Building**

- Preserve the Madris Building and emulate scale and form on two corners (Madris corner and Audi car corner)
- Preserve Mobil site as it serves an important neighborhood service; consider infill opportunities behind Mobil site
- 4-6 story new developments, 60'-70' max height, stepping down to adjacent residential structures
- Street wall could be 50' with setback for heights above that
- Consistent street wall at street level w/ground floor retail on corners and high transparency
- Parking behind buildings screened by retail, or underground (if financially feasible)
- Preserve scale of current Ace Ticket Building corner, as it they are shallow sites that are at the same or higher elevation as Milton Road residences; desire to keep/ enhance existing businesses



# Boylston at Valvoline / Dunkin Donuts, U-Haul Site and Cameron Street Neighborhood



- For Valvoline, Dunkin Donuts, and U-Haul sites, encourage higher density mixed-use and commercial development
- Preserve the current residential uses & scale in the Cameron Street neighborhood



Preserve Existing Uses



Encourage higher-density mixed use



# Boylston at Valvoline / Dunkin Donuts and U-Haul Site and Cameron Street Neighborhood



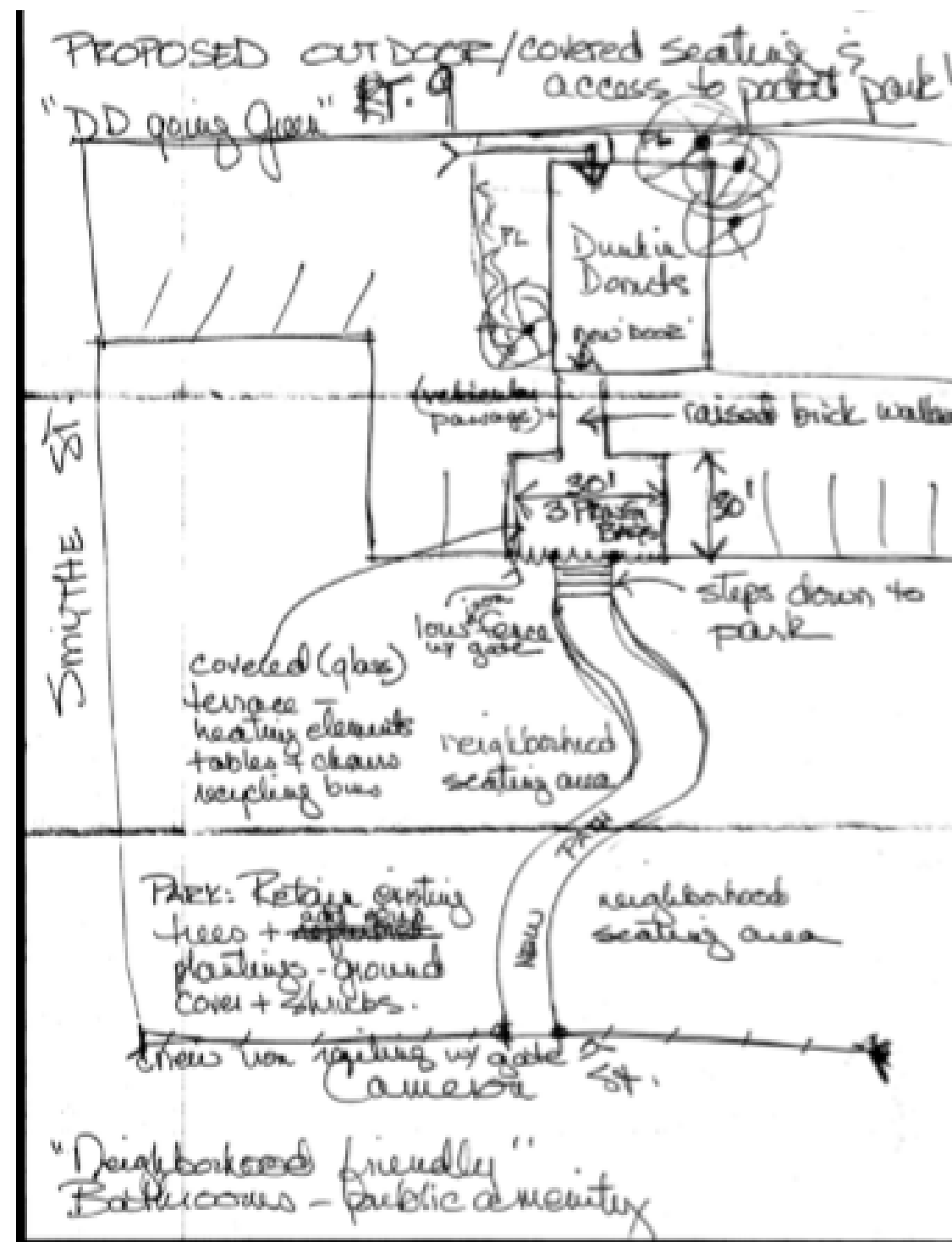
## Boylston at Valvoline/Dunkin Donuts –

- Incentivize aggregation of parcels across block to support better development.
- Site can support high density
- Potential for new commercial development
- Massing and shadow analysis needs to be completed and a financial feasibility needs to be completed to determine appropriate scale
- Arrange height and bulk toward Boylston Street with stepdown to Cameron Street.
- Parking behind buildings, screened or underground
- Portion of Dunkin Donuts site could also be appropriate for Open Space



# Boylston at Valvoline / Dunkin Donuts and U-Haul Site and Cameron Street Neighborhood

Below is a sketch of our initial thoughts:



## Description:

A 30' x 30' glass-enclosed dining terrace is connected to the sales area by a brick-paved walkway. This area will require about 3 parking spaces. A large glass window on the north side overlooks a secluded grove and gently-curving path connecting to residential Cameron Street. Existing trees will be preserved and enhanced by additional plantings. Two small seating areas will invite neighbors and customers to mingle in a social, and natural, setting. An iron railing along Cameron Street will further define this neighborhood amenity.

No changes to other areas of the lot are proposed.

## Dunkin Donuts Site -

Dunkin Donuts has an irregularly-shaped lot of about 20,000 square feet. An area of about 60'x80' could be large enough to create a small pocket park of about 4,800 sf. (.11 acres). For comparison, Linden Square (below) on Linden Street is .19 acres and Monmouth Park next to the Brookline Arts Center is .16 acre.

*Prepared by Hugh Mattison, TMM Precinct 5 Chairman, Tree Planting Committee December 3, 2007*



# Boylston at Valvoline / Dunkin Donuts, U-Haul Site and Cameron Street Neighborhood



## • U-Haul Site—

- Incentivize aggregation of parcels including Audi corner for more coordinated redevelopment
- Similar approach to Valvoline and Dunkin Donuts site with regards to scaling down towards abutting residential
- Alternative use could be a town-owned above-ground parking to support the Old Lincoln School but could also be utilized as parking after hours for the neighborhood
- Potential to create an accessible entry point to open space at the Old Lincoln School (could be integrated with roof of parking area)



# Boylston at Valvoline / Dunkin Donuts, U-Haul Site and Cameron Street Neighborhood



- Cameron Street Neighborhood

- Preserve residential uses and scale in order to protect the neighborhood's existing housing stock.
- Consider rezoning so existing housing stock is more conforming and encourage in-fill development where feasible; permit new construction only when the net number of housing units increases significantly



# Boylston East, Midas and Liner Tire Sites



- **Maintain the existing mixed-use and encourage contextual infill development at similar scale**



Maintain existing mixed-use



# Boylston East and Midas and Liner Tire Sites

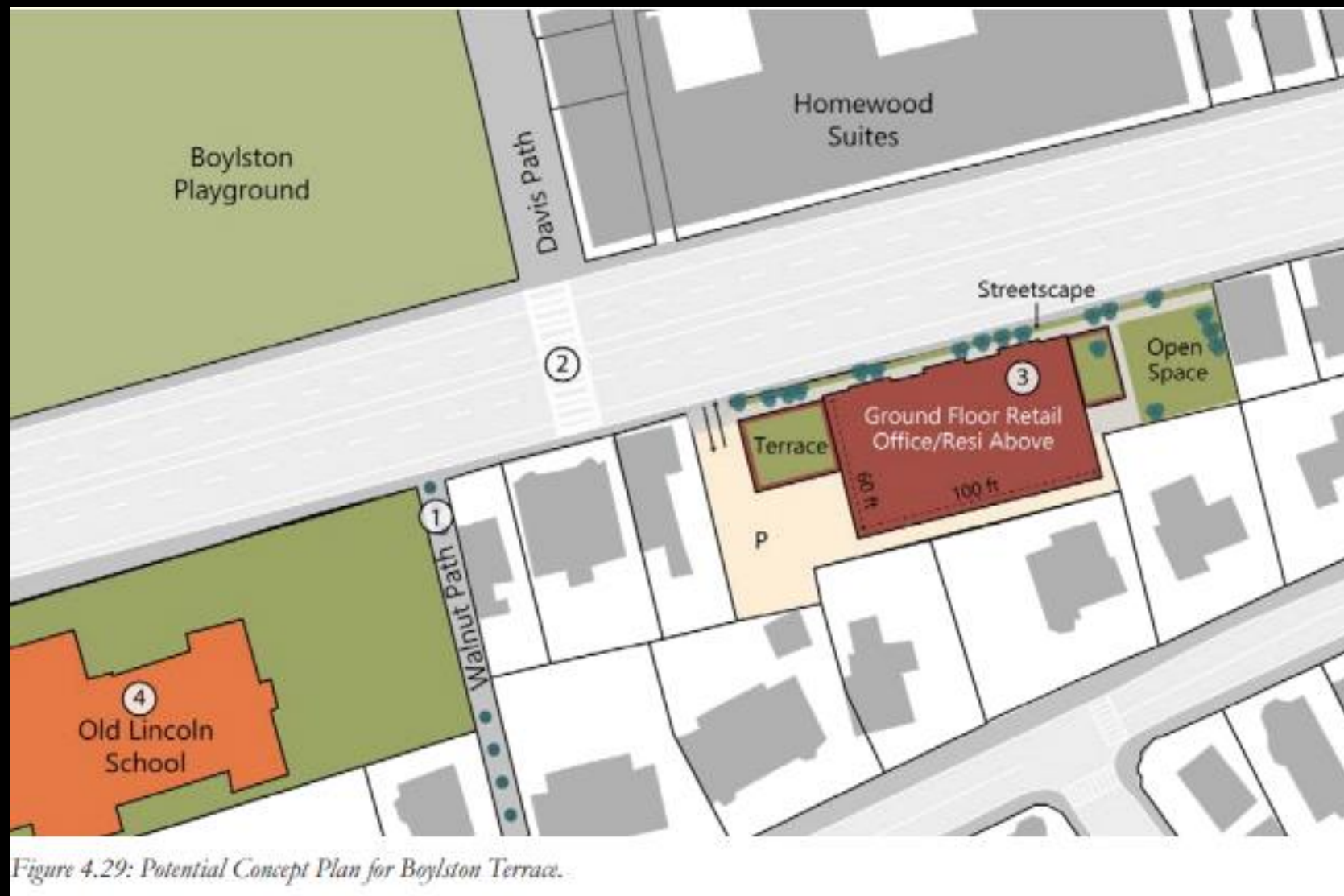


## - Midas and Liner Tire Sites

- Incentivize aggregation of parcels across the two sites to better coordinate redevelopment
- Detailed massing and viewshed studies needed prior to specifically recommending proposed bulk and height, given the site's shallow dimension and adjacency to Walnut Street residences
- Could include open space provision and improvements to Walnut Path as a community benefit
- Note that adjacent residents have clearly stated they do not want anything taller than existing buildings; recommendation to also study townhouse massing and 2-4 story multifamily development as alternatives



# Boylston East and Midas and Liner Tire Sites



## - Midas and Liner Tire Sites

### MIT Study Alternative Proposal (not a recommendation yet by staff)

- The development of an aggregated site (Midas and Liner Tire) could help cater to the needs of the hotel across the street
- An idea for redevelopment of the site could bring a modern-mid-rise, mixed-use development
- Ground-floor retail
- Upper floors can include high-end office spaces or residential units



# Boylston East, Midas and Liner Tire Sites



## - Boylston East

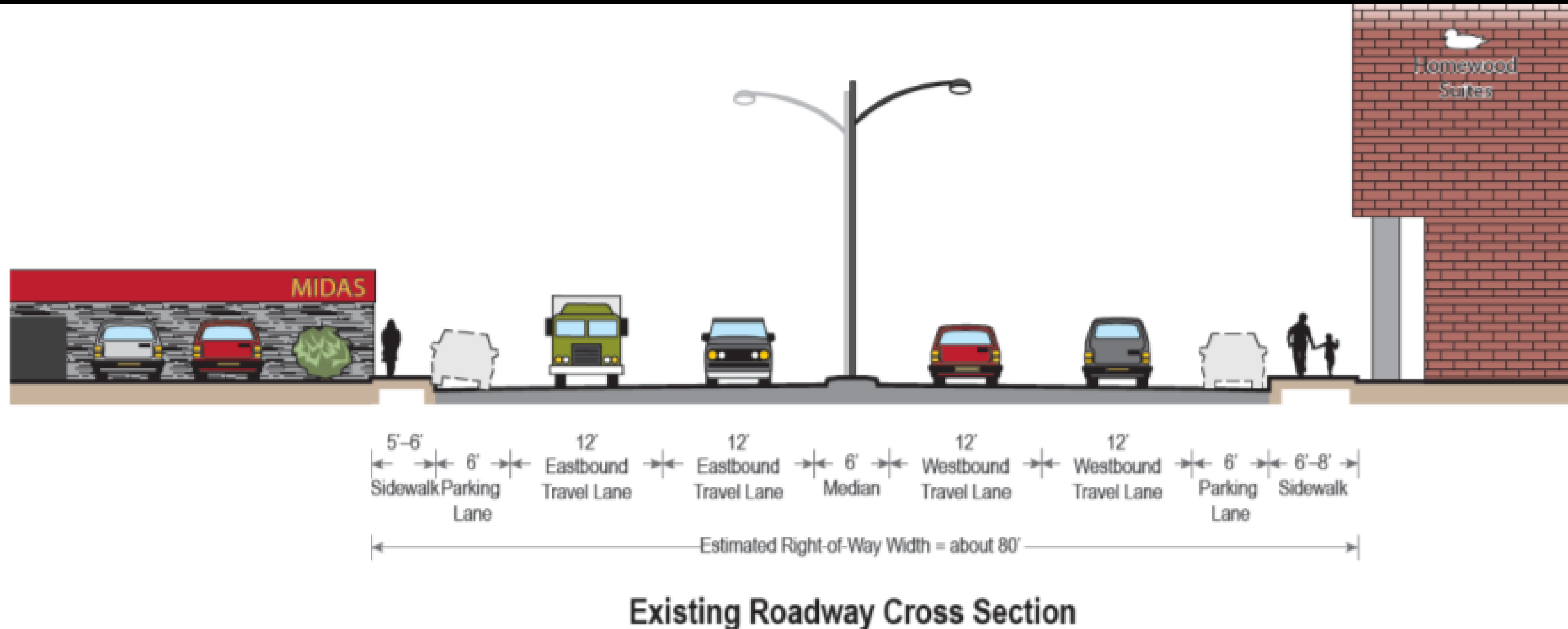
- One other approach is to maintain current zoning unless parcels are aggregated (establish a minimum lot size), especially on north side of Boylston which will allow for larger developments.
- Maximum height should not be higher than the Homewood Suites building (approximately 50')
- Building designs should be differentiated to avoid and mitigate the monolithic feel of the hotel
- Preserve buildings which hold historical significance in the neighborhood
- Incentivize redevelopment for additional housing (e.g. higher FAR for an aggregated site)



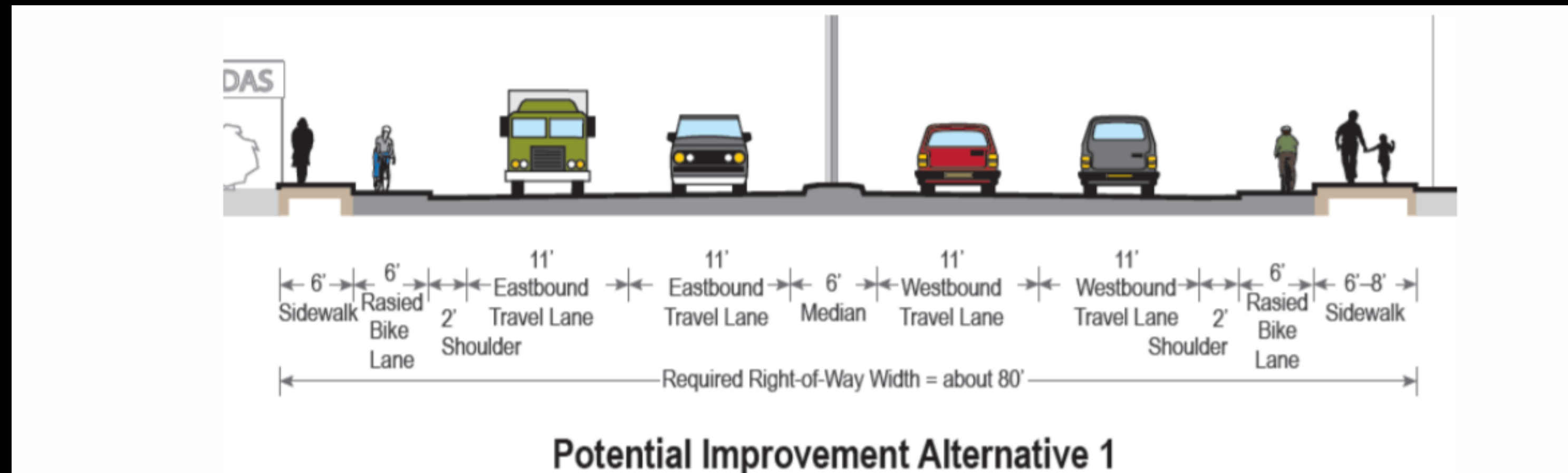
# Boylston Street Cross-Street Improvement Locations



# How Can the Committee Help Further Design Work for Boylston Street with MassDOT?



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## **Alternative 1**

Provide sidewalk level bike lanes and improve pedestrian crossings, transit access, and traffic operations

# MOVING FORWARD

Prior to next meeting:

- After reviewing the preliminary goals staff presented in this presentation, (re)read foundational documents
- Review development analysis regarding recent developments to better understand the effects of taking no action (will be emailed out separately in next couple weeks)
- Identify stakeholders and networks that may be interested in the meetings generally or on specific topics

Suggestion for next meeting:

- Invite housing staff and other affordable housing experts & regional developers for a housing primer as it relates to the Select Board's Town Policy Objectives and this neighborhood